CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRY MEETING JUNE 2020 – MAY 2021

Sunday, June 13, 2021

Via Zoom

GOOD SHEPHERD EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

300 Union Avenue ~ Somerville, New Jersey

GOOD SHEPHERD EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
ANNUAL CONGREGATION MINISTRY MEETING AGENDA
Sunday, June 13, 2021 ~ 10:00 AM via Zoom

Call to Order – Nancy Waltermire, Congregation Council President

a. Attendance (Quorum = **38**)

b. Recognition of members attending for the first time.

c. Purpose of this meeting: Review congregation's 2020-21 ministry year; elect members to our Congregation Council, and Nominating Committee

d. Prayer – led by Pastor Chelsea Miller

e. Guidelines for our discussion
Our Congregation Council, at its May 2004 meeting, adopted the following guidelines for discussion at our Congregational meetings:

- Any voting members wishing to speak to an issue will have an opportunity to do so.
- After all voting members wishing to speak to an issue have had the opportunity, any voting member wishing to speak again on the same issue will have one additional opportunity.
- The Chair can limit the length of time allotted each speaker if there are 5 or more members who wish to speak on an issue.

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes of Congregational Meetings

a) Congregational Ministry Meeting of June 14, 2020 *(page 3)*
b) Congregational Financial Meeting of January 31, 2021 *(page 5)*

Nominating Committee – Jill Weidner, Convener (non-voting)
Duties of Congregation Council Members *(see page 23)*
Bios of Candidates for Congregation Council *(see pages 25- 26)*

Nominating Committee recommends:

A. THAT THE CONGREGATION ELECT TO THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL: *(see page 24).*

- *Motions from the floor may be made.*
- *If there are additional nominations, a motion needs to be made and seconded that nominations be closed.*
- *After congregation votes to close nominations, then the congregation votes on the recommendations.*

B. THAT THE CONGREGATION ELECT **BRIAN PITTI and JULIE BURT** TO THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE FOR A 2-YEAR TERM ENDING MAY 2023 *(see page 26).*

Statistical Reports *(see pages 7-8)*

- Membership Report to the NJ Synod and ELCA
- Parish Register

Staff and Lay Leader Reports *(see pages 9-12)*

- Chelsea E. Miller, Pastor
- Jamie Dungey, Deacon
- Laura Meerovich, Office Administrator
- Nancy Waltermire, Council President

Review of June 2020 – May 2021 *(see pages 13-22)*

- Year-Round Activities
- Month by Month

NJ Synod Assembly Report *(see separate NJ Synod Report*)

- Delegates: Jeff Davis and Stephanie Meister

New Business

Thank you to outgoing members

- Congregation Council: Trevor Dunn, Skip Schaeffer, Johanna Scholl

Adjournment and Lord's Prayer

GOOD SHEPHERD EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
ANNUAL CONGREGATION MINISTRY MEETING MINUTES
Sunday, June 14, 2020 via Zoom

Call to Order – Nancy Waltermire, Congregation Council President, called the meeting to order at 10:10 AM

Attendance – 57 members attended.

f. Recognition of members attending for the first time

g. Purpose of this meeting: Review congregation's 2019-2020 ministry year; and elect members to our Congregation Council and Nominating Committee.

h. Prayer – led by Pastor Chelsea Miller

i. Guidelines for our discussion
Our Congregation Council, at its May 2004 meeting, adopted the following guidelines for discussion at our Congregational meetings:
- Any voting members wishing to speak to an issue will have an opportunity to do so.
- After all voting members wishing to speak to an issue have had the opportunity, any voting member wishing to speak again on the same issue will have one additional opportunity.
- The Chair can limit the length of time allotted each speaker if there are 5 or more members who wish to speak on an issue.

Approval of Agenda – **VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR; RECOMMENDATION PASSED**

Approval of Minutes of Congregation Meetings

a. Congregational Ministry Meeting of June 9, 2019 - **VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR; RECOMMENDATION PASSED**

b. Congregational Financial Meeting of January 26, 2020 **VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR; RECOMMENDATION PASSED checking spelling on page 5,**

c. Special Congregational Meeting of November 24, 2019 - **VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR; RECOMMENDATION PASSED**

d. Special Congregational Meeting of March 1, 2020 - **VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR; RECOMMENDATION PASSED**

e. Special Congregational Meeting of April 22, 2020 - **VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR; RECOMMENDATION PASSED**

Nominating Committee – Jill Weidner Convener (non-voting)

Duties of Congregation Council Members

Bios of Candidates for Congregation Council

A. **THAT THE CONGREGATION ELECT TO THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL FOR A 3-YEAR TERM RICHARD ALAGONA, LAURA PAKNIS AND NADINE PITT FOR A THREE-YEAR TERM ENDING JUNE 30, 2023 AND TREVOR DUNN FOR A 1 YEAR-TERM ENDING JUNE 30, 2019. VOTE: 56 FOR; 1 ABSTENTION; RECOMMENDATION PASSED.**

B. **THAT THE CONGREGATION ELECT BRIAN PITTI TO THE NOMINATION COMMITTEE FOR A 1-YEAR TERM ENDING MAY 2021. VOTE: 56 FOR; 1 ABSTENTION; RECOMMENDATION PASSED.**

C. **THAT THE CONGREGATION ELECT CHRIS FUSON AND LORETTA GRACE TO THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE FOR A 2-YEAR TERM ENDING MAY 2022 VOTE: 55 FOR; 2 ABSTENTION; RECOMMENDATION PASSED.**

Statistical Reports

- Membership Report to the NJ Synod and ELCA
- Parish Register

Staff and Leader Reports

- Chelsea E. Miller, Pastor
- Jamie Dungey, Deacon
- Charles German, Organist/Music Coordinator
- Laura Meerovich, Office Administrator
- Nancy Waltermire, Council President
- Carrie Rieble, Worship Steward Scheduler

Committee/Ministry Teams *(Members may ask questions or make brief comments)*

- Adult Ministry Team
- Caring Ministries
- Children, Youth, & Family Ministry Team
- Daycare Ministry Team (including its Director, Iolene Hadley)
- Evangelism Ministry Team
- Finance Ministry Team
  - Financial Book Review Team
  - *Financial Secretary and Treasurer reports were received at the January Financial Meeting*
- Memorial Fund Action Team
- Property Ministry Team
- Social Ministry Team
- Stewardship Ministry Team
- Technology Planning Team
- Thrivent Financial Partnership with GSLC
- Worship Planning Ministry Team

Affinity, Support and Task Groups

- Comfort Creators
- Crafteers
- Lutheran Men in Mission
- Military Services Support
- Shepherd Stitchers Quilt group
- Sixty Plussers
- Women of Good Shepherd (formerly Daughters of Eve)

- **NJ Synod Assembly Report (verbal update)** – Cancelled

NEW BUSINESS -
Thank you to Charles German for 49 years of service to Good Shepherd. He will be retiring effective December 31, 2020.

Thank you to outgoing members

- Congregation Council: Sabrina Eilers

Announcements

Adjournment and Lord's Prayer – The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 AM with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Dilks
Recorder

CONGREGATIONAL FINANCIAL MEETING MINUTES
Sunday, January 31, 2021 ~ 10:45 AM via Zoom

Nancy Waltermire, Congregation Council President presiding, called the meeting to order at 10:07 AM.

1. Call to Order
   a. Attendance – 55
   b. Recognition of members attending for the first time.
   c. Purpose of this meeting: review congregation's 2020 financial year and adopt a spending plan for 2021.
   d. Prayer – led by Pastor Chelsea Miller
   e. Guidelines for our discussion

   Our Congregation Council, at its May 2004 meeting, adopted the following guidelines for discussion at our Congregational meetings:

   - Any voting members wishing to speak to an issue will have an opportunity to do so.
   - After all voting members wishing to speak to an issue have had the opportunity; any voting member wishing to speak again on the same issue will have one additional opportunity.
   - The Chair can limit the length of time allotted each speaker if there are 5 or more members who wish to speak on an issue.

2. Financial Review of 2020
   a. 2020 Financial Secretary's Report – Eric Westberg
   b. 2020 Treasurer's Report – Ed Gould
3. Financial Projections for 2021
   a. Weekly Envelopes, Special, and Plate Offerings – Eric Westberg
   b. Presentation of the Spending Plan – Jill Weidner

Recommendation from Congregation Council:

THAT THE CONGREGATION ADOPT PROPOSED 2020 SPENDING PLAN, TOTALING $453,967. VOTE: 52 FOR; 1 ABSTENTION. RECOMMENDATION PASSED.

- ❖ Discussion of the Plan from the Floor
- ❖ Vote on the Recommendation.
  - ❖ Jack Denys made motion. **THAT PASTOR'S COMPENSATION BE INCREASED BY** $**3,178 FROM $79,822 TO $83,000.** Seconded by Gene Lepelletier. Eric Westberg called the question. Kevin Whitehead seconded. **VOTE ON CALL THE QUESTION: 5O FOR; 1 OPPOSED AND 2 ABSTENTION.** Motion to call question passed. **VOTE ON MOTION 24 FOR; 48 OPPOSED; AND 1 ABSTENTION. MOTION FAILED**
  - ❖ Christine Duque made motion **THAT PAY RATE FOR DEACON JAMIE TO $30.34 PER HOUR COMPENSATION TOTAL INCREASE OF $1, 993.00. THE FUNDS WOULD BY TAKEN FROM UTILITIES, GAS & ELECTRIC LINE SINCE WE HOPE TO SEE SAVINGS AS WE MOVE TO SOLAR POWER.** Stephanie Mister seconded. **VOTE: 53 FOR; 1 ABSTENTION. RECOMMENDATION PASSED.**
  - ❖ Linda Rolando made motion **THAT PASTOR'S COMPENSATION BE INCREASED BY $3,178 FROM $79,822 TO $83,000**. Seconded by Myla Groth. Eric Westberg called the question. Lee Wollenberg seconded. **VOTE ON CALL THE QUESTION: ALL IN FAVOR; RECOMMENDATION PASSED. VOTE ON MOTION: 21 YES, 28 NOS; 6 ABSTENTION. RECOMMENDATION FAILED.**
  - ❖ Recommendation from Congregation Council:

THAT GOOD SHEPHERD APPLY FOR A SECOND PPP LOAN IF ELIGIBLE. VOTE: 51 FOR; 2 ABSTENTIONS. RECOMMENDATION PASSED.

4. Approval of Good Shepherd Christian Daycare Spending i
   - ❖ Recommendation from Congregation Council:

THAT THE CONGREGATION ADOPT THE PROPOSED 2021 GOOD SHEPHERD CHRISTIAN DAYCARE SPENDING PLAN TOTALING $297,300. VOTE: 51 FOR; 2 ABSTENTIONS. RECOMMENDATION PASSED.

5. Update:
6. Lord's Prayer

6. Adjournment – Meeting was adjourned at 11: 53 AM with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindy Dilks

Recorder

REPORT TO NEW JERSEY SYNOD
Calendar Year 2020

Baptized Membership as of December 31, 2019		**644**
Members received during 2020		
By baptism	5	
By affirmation of faith	7	
By transfer of membership	2	
Total members received this year	**14**	
Members removed during 2020		
By death	9	
By transfer	2	
For other reasons	3	
Total members removed this year	**14**	
Baptized Membership as of December 31, 2020		**644**
Confirmed Membership as of December 31, 2020		**508**
Confirmed and Active Members on the Roll		**366**

STATISTICAL COMPARISON

Year End:	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Baptized	743	732	704	718	721	677	687	692	686	558	574	592	587	604	644	644
Confirmed	528	523	514	529	530	512	541	557	533	466	481	499	478	486	509	508
Confirmed – Active/Voting	489	478	455	474	473	441	480	474	450	389	346	357	351	362	366	366
Worship Attendance	246	223	209	207	207	226	221	209	197	174	175	170	159	162	164	NA*

*In-person worship was suspended as of March 13, 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Average weekly attendance from January 1 – March 8, 2020 was 155.

PARISH REGISTER

June 10, 2020 – June 12, 2021

BAPTISMS (9)

2020

September 3	Nora James From
October 24	Jackson Matthew McNamee
October 25	Remington Douglas Leininger
November 21	Amelia Adrienne Kierney

2021

April 18	Joseph Dominic Roselle
May 2	Leo Ace Conner
May 16	Luke Michael Steinberg
May 23	Jonathan Joseph Sapiezynski
June 6	Christian Joseph Richard Bell

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

CONFIRMATION (7)

Rite of Confirmation - June 6, 2021

Thomas Balla
Madeline Caughron
Nicholas Dubinsky
Emily Leppert
Kaitlin Leppert
Mark Marsigliano
Caitlin Sutton

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

NEW MEMBERS (17)

Affirmation of Faith

March 7, 2021

Justin & Patricia Craig; Olivia
Lillian Gasper*
Anne & Anthony Isedeh; Leisel, Lailah, Adaline, and Malia
Al Roos
Jody Scalisi; Courtney, Brianne, and David Nissel
Mark Stitt
Matthew Stitt

*Re-joined May 2021

DEATHS (10)

2020

July 7	William Jonat
July 10	Ronald Throndson
October 29	Frank Henrikson
November 6	Doris Holden
December 1	Donna Fuller
December 12	Lois Kronicz
December 24	Mary Ann Holowczak

2021

January 6	Joseph Scalisi
February 21	Eleanor Shampanore
April 14	Mildred Kunkel

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

FUNERALS (12)

*Non-Member**

2020

July 15	William Jonat
July 18	Ronald Throndson
August 14	Stephen Kmet*
November 9	Doris Holden
December 19	Lois Kronicz

2021

February 4	Rosa Gruen*
March 25	Tony Whalen
May 4	Dianna Andersen*
May 21	Joseph Scalisi
May 22	Donna Fuller
May 22	Eddie Fuller, Sr.*
June 5	Mildred Kunkel
~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

STAFF REPORT

Chelsea E. Miller, Pastor

"I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." ~ Isaiah 43:19

Dear Partners in Ministry –

This Scripture has been on the whiteboard in my office for a few months now. I have reflected on it more times than I can count. It has brought me comfort knowing that God is with us even in times of great change, times in the wilderness, desert times. And it has challenged me to wonder about new things God is doing in our midst – ways in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

It has certainly been a year that none of us expected – and yet, through a pandemic that physically separated us from one another, we have stayed connected as community. Technology has enabled us to continue our ministry work. Generosity has invited us to meet new needs in our community. Innovation created ways to receive Holy Communion, pray together and be blessed in our cars and on our way. A continued welcoming atmosphere also meant new partners in ministry as individuals and families joined our church community in March.

I would be remiss if I didn't also acknowledge some of the great loss that we've had this year. We have not been able to mourn deaths together. We have missed social gatherings. We have not worshipped in the sanctuary together in 15 months. These are things we have been grieving and may even continue to grieve in different and unexpected ways.

And yet, we look forward to what God is doing among us – the new things. We have begun to gather together for worship outside – and what fun that is! We will move back into the sanctuary. We will celebrate joyous life events and mourn loss – together. We will move forward from this time as a community of faith, greeting one another with Christian love and understanding, recognizing that we will move forward at different paces and in different ways. Still – we will move forward together with God as our way and our river.

My invitation to you right now is to be patient with one another. Continue to be in relationship with one another. Pray together. Remember God's presence with all of us as we both celebrate and grieve. And I invite your excitement as we work together to see how we will be the church now. God is doing a new thing. I wonder what that will be! And I can't wait to figure it out with you.

It has been my privilege to walk through this year with you. Some moments have been SO hard and others have been filled with laughter – I am grateful for it all. Thanks to our GSLC Council for their diligence this year as we've made challenging decisions and worked together for the care and safety of our whole GSLC community. Thank you to the many task forces and teams that continued to do the work of ministry in this place. And thank you to our staff – Deacon Jamie, Laura, Iolene, Andrey, Debbie, and Shalom – I don't know what I'd do without you! It is a joy to work beside you in this ministry.

Looking forward to God doing a new thing as we spring forward!

God's peace,

Pastor Chelsea

Pastor Chelsea Miller

STAFF REPORT

Jamie Dungey, Deacon

The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end;
they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him." Lamentations 3:22-24

The above scripture has comforted me during the past year because I am reminded that God's love for us never ends. I have experienced the love of God through the members of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. We can find hope in God whose love endures forever!

I would like to thank you for all of your support in my role of Deacon. I would especially like to thank Pastor Chelsea and Laura for all of their support. And I would like to thank the Adult Ministry Team and the Social Ministry Team. You all never cease to amaze me with your support.

As a member of the Adult Ministry Team, I have coordinated the assembly and delivery of the care packages for the homebound members. These care packages were delivered by the home communion ministers at Christmas and Easter. I participated in the "Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man" series. I taught a few diakonia classes for some members so that they could finish the graduation requirements.

As a member of the Caring Ministry Team, I was able to check in with members to see how they were doing. Not being able to visit the home bound members was hard but we were able to stay connected via phone calls.

As a member of the Social Ministry Team, I have had the opportunity to participate in outreach projects such as addressing food insecurity and Valentine's card writing.

I am so blessed to have the opportunity to participate in the Ash Wednesday Worship on the Way, to assist with worship for the Quiet Christmas service, to preach once a month and to lead memorial services.

My prayer is that you experience God's steadfast love and share that love with others on your faith journey!!!

God's Peace,

Deacon Jamie Dungey

STAFF REPORT

Laura Meerovich, Office Administrator

"*Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer*." Romans 12:12

When I used this same scripture last year, I had no idea how patient I was going to have to be! Hope, patience, and prayer continue to be my guides as we make our way through this difficult time.

They say that the only thing that is constant is change, and that couldn't be more appropriate for my position as office administrator – thanks to the pandemic, there is virtually nothing done the same way as it was when I first arrived here as a fulltime employee seven years ago.

Some accomplishments:

- Continued to update, create, revise, and expand our Constant Contact email communications.
- Served on the Communications Administrator Hiring Team and the Physical Gathering Task Force
- Started a separate database for members who joined in the pre-computer age – from Charter Sunday, 12/7/52, roughly through 2006 when we began using Church Windows.
- Learned new ways of using Church Windows to help with donation reports.
- Coordinated the new lease for a Xerox copier and managed its installation, and the removal of the old duplicator.
- Assumed more payroll responsibilities, including the allocation of expenses to the Daycare.
- Created postcards and inserts for Love Kits and Holy Week bags, and posters for the Stations of the Cross self-guided tour (sadly cancelled due to inclement weather)
- Resumed serving the pantry guests, including packing bags for them; helped with the creation of new pantry procedures, along with the Social Ministry Team.
- Recreated this document, created new forms and spreadsheets, including tracking of debit card expenses, funding buckets, and NJ Synod grant.
- Assumed responsibility for music copyright reporting

There are always so many people to thank, and there were so many folks who kept our many ministries running at full steam, but this year I would like to lift up just a few of the leaders who have helped keep the office running: Jeff Davis, Jill Weidner, Dean Levin, and Stephanie Meister, and everyone who served on Council, the Physical Gathering Task Force, and the Hiring Teams.

Our staff was in transition this year: we said hello and goodbye to two staff members – Shalom Obisie-Orlu and Jordan Klotz, it was a pleasure working with both of you and I wish you well!

Long-time website manager David Scholl and even longer-time organist and music director Charles German moved on to new pursuits/retirement – David, it was so much fun to work with you. Charles, you are amazingly talented, many thanks for all your support and friendship over the years, and for continuing to answer the phone when I call for your help to figure out the copyrights, I so appreciate it!

Finally, our staff – what a blessing! Pastor Chelsea Miller, Jamie Dungey, Debbie Gelormine, Iolene Hadley, Andrey Rodriguez, and Skylar Graham, thank you all for being such great partners in ministry.

God's peace,
Laura Meerovich
Office Administrator

CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Nancy A. Waltermire

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. —I Corinthians 12:12

Dear Siblings in Faith,

These past 14 months have changed our lives in so many ways. It has brought families together, more awareness of hunger in our own communities, and the power of prayer for so many of us.

I want to take this moment to thank all of you for your support of our council and Pastor Chelsea, for their continuous leadership and guidance during the pandemic and its many days of uncertainty. I thank all of you for participating in our Zoom worship services, Worship on the Way, and events.

I also thank the many "behind the scenes" volunteers for the many tasks they assist with to allow us to continue to spread the Good News!

Our congregation is blessed to have Pastor Chelsea, President-elect Jill Weidner, Tech Committee, Laura, Debbie, and all the many volunteers that allow for us to continue to worship together and participate in the MANY Zoom activities.

You all have demonstrated that we are the church and continue to praise God and Jesus Christ no matter where we are in this world of uncertainty every day!

Thank you all for ALL your time and MANY talents!

Our ministry teams continue to serve us and our community in so many ways. Our Affinity/Support and Task Groups provide a wide variety of activities and services based on shared interests and abilities, and ideas for new groups are always welcome. We are blessed by the many talents our members continue to share with us and our community.

We continue to grow as a congregation and care for others throughout the community and the world. As we move forward, we will continue to focus on the vision we all have and what that looks like in our "new normal".

May we rejoice in where we have been, celebrate where we are, and marvel at the places, people, and things God will reveal to us in the days, months, and years ahead.

Stepping Out in Faith Together and Visioning,

Nancy A. Waltermire

Council President

"So, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" —2 Corinthians 5:17

GOOD SHEPHERD EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

2020-21 Year-Round Gatherings, Roles, & Tasks of Our Ministries

Many thanks to the loving, caring, and serving volunteers who participated in these and many other behind-the-scenes activities that were provided during a very difficult year.

Adult Ministry ~ Many of our Adult Ministries continued throughout the pandemic via Zoom, including Wednesday and Thursday Bible studies, Grief Support Group, book discussions, diakonia, discussions surrounding racial justice, and virtual Women of Good Shepherd gatherings. Chair: Lee Wollenberg

Caring Ministries ~ Once we were allowed, visits to the homebound and weekly flower deliveries resumed. Prayer ministers were available by phone throughout the pandemic. Many check-in phone calls to GSLC members were made, and greeting cards to the homebound, grieving, or sick were sent throughout the year. Meals were provided to a few families experiencing grief and illness. Chair: Janice Reinhardt (who wrote the beautiful thank-you, above!)

Children, Youth, & Family ~ Pr. Chelsea provided a weekly family check-in via Zoom; Confirmation classes were held via Zoom or outside in the playground; weekly Christian Education was provided via Zoom by Cross Roads Camp.

Creativity Groups ~ Individuals worked on projects from home. ***Comfort Creators*** knitted and crocheted prayer shawls, lap blankets, hats, scarves, and baby items year-round; ***Crafteers*** worked on needlecraft and counted cross stitch keepsakes for baptisms (8 this year) and for other life events, and they also checked-in with each other bi-weekly via Zoom; ***Shepherd Stitchers*** made over 1000 facemasks, and dozens of quilts, fleece hats, tote bags and aprons over the course of the year. Chairs: Roxanne Powers, Joan Grace, Janice Brunsbach

Daycare Ministry ~ Our Daycare successfully reopened in July of 2020 with a reduced enrollment, change of hours and procedures, and reduced staff. Chair: Gale Murphy Director: Iolene Hadley

Finance Ministry ~ This ministry continued to operate throughout the pandemic, making deposits, paying bills, producing monthly reports, evaluating Covid-related grant and loan opportunities, and more. Chair: Jill Weidner

Property Ministry ~ After a delay, the solar panel project resumed. Maintenance on the building and grounds is ongoing, with a year that featured a lot of snow removal, and hiccups with the heating in the Daycare. Andrey Rodriguez has picked up cleaning of the building.

Social Ministry ~ Collections and distribution of funds to our community partners continued throughout the pandemic – see the monthly reports for all the details! Co-chairs Stephanie Meister, Lynn Weckworth

Technology Team ~ Provides IT support to the staff and Daycare whenever we ask (which is often). Chair: Jeff Davis

Worship Planning Ministry ~ Twice-weekly worship continued both online and creatively in-person, with Drive Thru Communion, Gathering in the Word, Worship on the Way, or Outdoor Worship held during good weather. Volunteers did readings and sent in photos to enrich and brighten our virtual services. The choir checked-in weekly via Zoom, and choir director Debbie (and others) supplied pre-recordings of hymns and music. Chair: Nancy Waltermire

Read on for details about all of our endeavors!

JUNE 2020

Outreach

- GSLC staffed the Somerset County Food Bank's Somerville branch for 4 Saturday mornings

Worship

- Tech Team continued to use the previously streamed services that are stored on Facebook to get recordings of music for Pastor Chelsea to use for weekly online services (ongoing).

Our GSLC Community

- Adult Ministry hosted a discussion of the movie *Just Mercy*
- Book Discussion Group began reading *Gratefulness, the Heart of Prayer* by David Steindl-Rast
- *Crafteers* created counted cross stitch keepsakes for First Holy Communion
- First meeting of the Physical Gathering Task Force
- GSLC had its Annual Ministry Meeting, the first held entirely over Zoom!
- Tech Team did maintenance work on network issues to keep church computers up. Continued support of use of Zoom for church meetings.

JULY 2020

Outreach

- Due to the generosity of members of GSLC, additional financial support was sent to the Somerville Fire Department, Somerville Rescue Squad, Visions & Pathways, Safe & Sound, Cross Roads, and Lutheran Social Ministries of NJ.

Worship

- First Drive-Thru Communion
- First Gathering in the Word

Our GSLC Community

- Adult Ministry facilitated the first "A Conversation about Race"
- Tech Team: provided streaming support for several memorial services in the memorial garden. Temporarily increased user limits for Zoom usage to accommodate sharing of remembrances.
- *Women of Good Shepherd* held a Happy Hour via Zoom
- Daycare reopened

AUGUST 2020

Outreach

- Over the past 3 months *Shepherd Stitchers* distributed **1,000+** facemasks to healthcare workers and GSLC members, family, and friends.
- In lieu of hosting IHN guests, GSLC funded the housing and food costs for guests for 8/16-8/23.
- 105 Backpacks were assembled and delivered to local schools and organizations using previously donated items. School supplies were also given to an elementary school in Plainfield and our GSLC Daycare remote learning students.

Worship

- Gathering in the Word/Drive-Thru Communion

Our GSLC Community

- Book Discussion Group began *Tattoos on the Heart* by Gregory Boyle
- First of three viewings and discussions of "Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man" hosted by Adult Ministry.
- Tech Team set up a new laptop purchased for Laura to enable her to work better remotely.

SEPTEMBER 2020

Outreach

- For *God's Work Our Hands* Sunday we collected food to re-stock our pantry, and school supplies which were given to the Food Bank for distribution

Worship

- Gathering in the Word (including collection of non-perishable food & toiletry items and Shop-Rite gift cards – so much it filled the Narthex entry!!); Drive-Thru Communion continued
- We held a postponed-from-June Rite of Confirmation for our 6 Confirmands
- Bibles were distributed to our 3-year-olds, 3rd graders, and 7th graders during worship.

Our GSLC Community

- Communications and Music Ministry Hiring Task Forces were created and met for the first time
- In addition to regular programming, the Daycare offered a supervised learning center for students attending school remotely; the children went "apple-picking" on the GSLC property
- Tech Team investigated costs for upgrading GSLC network as well as future streaming platforms.
- *Women of Good Shepherd*: Book Discussion via Zoom: *Killers of the Flower Moon* by David Grann

OCTOBER 2020

Outreach

- Due to the generosity of members of GSLC, additional financial support was sent to Delaware Valley Scleroderma Foundation, First Friends NJ/NY, The Coffee House Project, POAC, ELCA World Hunger, and Toys for Tots.
- In lieu of hosting IHN guests, GSLC funded the housing and food costs for guests for 10/25-11/1

Worship

- Blessing of the Animals
- Gathering in the Word; Drive-Thru Communion continued
- Lutheran Spirit Week virtual activities took place in preparation for Reformation Sunday
- We held a postponed-from-April First Holy Communion for 2 children

Our GSLC Community

- "Abundant Generosity" Stewardship Campaign kicked off
- Baptisms resumed outdoors
- Daycare held a "back to school night" via email; held outdoor Halloween Parade and Trunk-or-Treating
- Tech Team replaced our aging network switches and WiFi network to support growing use, including remote learning support by daycare. Set up a new Virtual Private Network (VPN) for remote access to church network for staff and volunteers, to provide more security for our network. Replaced aging backbone cabling with fiber optics.
- Property workday held

NOVEMBER 2020

Outreach

- Food was collected for the Food Bank in lieu of creating Thanksgiving baskets, including 10 turkeys
- We pooled our Shop Rite points to get free turkeys for the Food Bank with our "Turkeymania" drive

Worship

- All Saints' Sunday prayers in the Memorial Garden; final Gathering in the Word
- Virtual Thanksgiving Worship
- Worship on the Way begins and includes distribution of pie for Thanksgiving

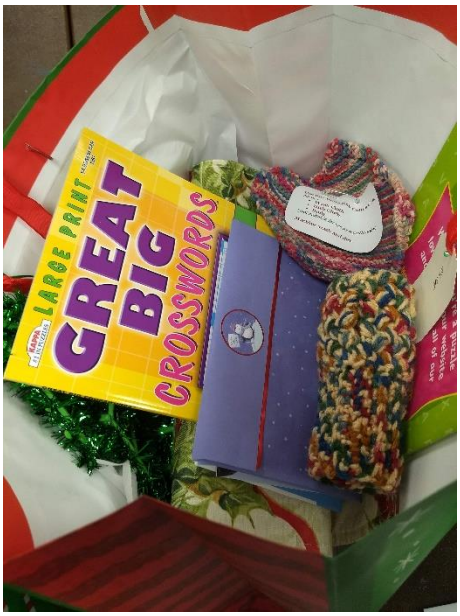
Our GSLC Community

- "Abundant Generosity" Stewardship Campaign ended; we met our goal of increasing pledges by 11% (we actually increased by 14%!), and received bonus pledges from 4 generous members
- Adult Ministry discussed the book, *Dear Church* by Pr. Lenny Duncan
- Daycare held Picture Day, and Thanksgiving feasts for the students in their classrooms
- Diakonia classes resumed
- Tech Team replaced our Optimum Online communications services with Verizon FiOS. Also retired our aging PBX phone system and phones and switched to FiOS Voice over IP (VoIP) services and phones.
- *Women of Good Shepherd* Travelogue: China & Tibet by Cathy Thornton
- Youth Group prepared College Care Packages

DECEMBER 2020

Outreach

- Food was collected for the Food Bank in lieu of creating Christmas food baskets *(Supported by a Thrivent Action Team grant)*
- Virtual Angel Tree – 150+ gift cards were distributed to clients of Visions & Pathways, Safe & Sound and 10 local families. *(Supported by a Thrivent Action Team grant)*
- GSLC staffed the Somerset County Food Bank's Somerville branch for 4 Saturday mornings
- In lieu of hosting IHN guests, GSLC funded the housing and food costs for guests for 12/6-12/12.
- *Shepherd Stitchers* distributed 12+ quilts to Safe+Sound Somerset and 92 fleece hats to the Salvation Army and homeless shelters
- *Crafteers* donated small, handcrafted items for homebound Christmas gift bags.
- *Comfort Creators* crocheted 7 shawls for homebound Christmas gift bags and knitted/crocheted 32 hats and 24 scarves for distribution to the YMCA and the Salvation Army, with some leftover hats and scarves going to the UU Congregation of Somerset Hills for their collection for the homeless.
- *Caring and Social Ministry Teams*, along with Deacon Jamie, prepared gift bags of homemade cookies, baked by *Women of Good Shepherd*, and other handmade and donated items, and delivered them to our homebound



Worship

- A special "Quiet Christmas" service presented
- Plans for in-person, outdoor Christmas Eve worship were eliminated due to tightened restrictions on gatherings, as Covid cases began to rise.
- Plans for Christmas Eve Worship on the Way experiencing the Christmas Story had to be cancelled due to inclement weather.

Our GSLC Community

- Book Discussion Group began reading *Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible Again* by Rachel Held Evans
- Christmas party held via Zoom (hosted by GSLC's Leadership for Faithful Innovation team)

JANUARY 2021

Outreach

- GSLC staffed the Somerset County Food Bank's Somerville branch for 4 Saturday mornings
- H.O.M.E. (formerly IHN) meals were donated by members of GSLC and housing was funded in lieu of hosting onsite 1/3-1/10.

Our GSLC Community

- Annual Financial Meeting held via Zoom
- Finance Team presented financial results of 2020 and assembled and presented spending plan for 2021
- Pastoral Care Zoom hours initiated
- Tech Team provided server maintenance, support for new email for transition staffing, and support for remote access via VPN.

FEBRUARY 2021

Outreach

- Donations of diapers, wipes, formula, bottles, bibs and baby clothes were donated to the Center for Great Expectations. *(Supported by a Thrivent Action Team Grant.)*

Worship

- Ash Wednesday Worship on the Way with distribution of ashes and Holy Communion
- Lenten Book Study and Thursday Worship began and continued until Holy Week

Our GSLC Community

- Tech Team worked with installers on setup of new Xerox copier. Upgraded Church Windows software to current levels.

- *Women of Good Shepherd* met for fellowship via Zoom early in the month and wrote Valentines to our homebound and others needing TLC, and then met again via Zoom for Mardi Gras Happy Hour, sharing personal stories to get to know each other better.
- *Comfort Creators* crocheted/knitted 20 baby sets (blanket, sweater, hat) for the Center for Great Expectations.

MARCH 2021

Outreach

- Caring and Social Ministry Teams, along with Deacon Jamie, prepared Easter Baskets of homemade cookies (prepared by *Women of Good Shepherd*) and other treats and delivered them to our homebound
- Food was collected for the Food Bank in lieu of creating Easter food baskets – over 600 non-perishable food items and 13 hams were donated to the Somerset County Food Bank! (*Supported by a Thrivent Action Team Grant.*)
- Palm Sunday sock donations totaled 314 pairs, for men, women, and children, and were gratefully received by SHIP (Samaritan Homeless Interim Program)
- *Shepherd Stitchers* created and donated 20 tote bags for the Center for Great Expectations, 12+ aprons for a *Stitchers* Fundraiser, and 12 quilts for HOME.
- We pooled our Shop Rite points to get free hams for the Food Bank with our "Hamdemonium" drive

Worship

- Palms and Holy Week activity bags were distributed, in the rain, on Palm Sunday during a special Worship on the Way, which included a donkey!

Our GSLC Community

- "Thinking of You" cards were sent to every household in the congregation
- Began assisting seniors in getting vaccinations
- Daycare celebrated Read across America and dressed up for Wacky Week; Family Appreciation breakfast-to-go was given to the families
- Tech Team researched and proposed new laptops for daycare and future streaming solutions.
- We hosted "Lace for Love" Bridal Gown donations in the parking lot
- *Women of Good Shepherd* Lenten Devotion and Chair Yoga led by Christine Duque via Zoom.

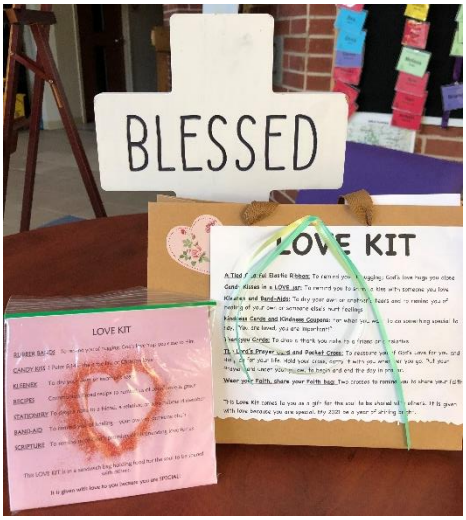
APRIL 2021

Worship

- On Maundy Thursday we offered two virtual services and Worship on the Way (the morning event had to be canceled due to inclement weather). A loaf of communion bread, homemade by our bread bakers, was distributed to all those who attended Worship on the Way.
- Good Friday's planned Self-Guided Stations of the Cross had to be canceled due to high winds, but the Stations were made available virtually. Two virtual services were also held.
- Easter Sunday weather was perfect! Three outdoor services were offered, "Sunrise" 8am, Traditional 10am, and Family 12 noon, and were well-attended. All worshippers received a tulip or a lily as part of our Easter celebration.

Our GSLC Community

- *Comfort Creators* crocheted 125 pocket cross squares for distribution during Worship on the Way.
- Daycare held an outdoor Easter Egg hunt
- Tech Team received new laptops for use by daycare director and manager
- *Women of Good Shepherd* enjoyed an encore of their Chair Yoga class, back due to popular demand
- The joy and hope of the Easter season continued with the Worship-on-the-Way distribution of "Love Kits," with adult and children's versions: packages of tokens, scripture, and more, to remind us of God's never-ending love for us.



MAY 2021

Outreach

- H.O.M.E. meals were provided by GSLC members and housing was funded in lieu of onsite hosting for 5/23-5/30.
- Non-perishable food items and Shop-Rite gift cards were donated for our GSLC pantry

Worship

- First Holy Communion class was offered virtually and in-person. Our 3rd graders received First Holy Communion on May 23 – Pentecost Sunday!
- Outdoor worship resumed on two Sundays, including Pentecost Sunday.

Our GSLC Community

- *Crafteers* created counted cross stitch keepsakes for Confirmation
- Daycare parents gave small gifts to the teachers each day during Teacher Appreciation Week; Muffins-to-Go for Moms to celebrate Mother's Day
- Tech Team began purchasing equipment for new streaming platform. Currently completing setup of laptops for daycare and working on transition of email system to Google for nonprofits.
- *Women of Good Shepherd* hosted a Poetry Workshop led by Ellen Parker via Zoom
- Property Workday was held
- After a rain delay, the Social Ministry Team kicked off the Good Shepherd Community Garden

DUTIES OF CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEMBERS

(from our Constitution)

The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:

a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.

b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.

c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.

d. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling, appointment, or employment.

e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.

f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill and as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.

g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.

h. To emphasize partnership with the Synod and church wide units of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

The Congregation Council shall:

- be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.
- see that the provisions of this constitution, its bylaws, and the continuing resolutions are carried out.
- provide for an annual review of the membership roster.
- be responsible for the appointment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this congregation.
- submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.
- normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by a pastor or the president and shall be called at the request of at least one-half of its members.

[Council currently usually meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month.]

NOMINEES FOR CONGREGATION COUNCIL

Youth Representative - 1 year term:
Maji Whalen 2021-2022

1st 3-year term
Christeen Jacquish 2021-2024
Wes Thielke 2021-2024

2nd 3-year term
Lynn Francesconi 2021-2024

~~~~~~

Current Council Members:

Richard Alagona 2020-2023
Lynn Francesconi 2018-2021
Skip Fuller 2019-2022
Laura Paknis 2020-2023
Nadine Pitti 2020-2023
Skip Schaeffer 2018-2021 (2nd term)
Johanna Scholl 2018-2021
Nancy Waltermire 2019-2022 (2nd term)
Suzanne Westberg 2019-2022 (2nd term)
Jill Weidner 2019-2022

~~~~~~

NON-COUNCIL NOMINEES

The Nominating Committee recommends the following persons:

Brian Pitti – Nominating Committee – two-year term – 2021-2023

Julie Burt– Nominating Committee - two-year term – 2021-2023

COUNCIL NOMINEE BIOS

First 3-Year Term

Christeen Jacquish
Attending GSLC since 2003 but official member as of March 2020.
Family: Married to Eric Jacquish. Mother to Colin Miller & Sean and Charleigh Jacquish.
Occupation: Dental Assistant

Current Participation:
- Physical Gathering task force
- Church Community garden

Prior Participation:
- Sunday school teacher
- Living Nativity crew
- Refreshments

Wes Thielke
Member of GSLC since January 2019
Family: Married to Francesca Thielke since May 1987. We have four children, no longer living at home, and a cat.
Occupation: Software Engineer, retired since 2018. Square Dance caller and teacher since 2007. Officer (former president) of the Callers' Council of New Jersey. Graduate of Muhlenberg College. Lived in Switzerland for 6 years, where I met my wife. Grew up in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Hobbies: Flying (private pilot) and Square Dancing (together with my wife).

Current Participation:
- Choir
- Technology Committee
- Bible study

Second 3-Year Term

Lynn Francesconi
Member since 1999
Family: Married with 3 children, Heidi (37), Ben Jr. (35), Krista (33) Husband, Ben, is a retired chemist.
Occupation: Chemistry Professor at Hunter College of the City University of New York in NYC

Current Participation:
- Council Member
- Communications Hiring Task Force
- Community Garden

Prior Participation:
- Refreshment Host
- Snack Provider
- Usher

Youth Representative

Maji Whalen
My name is Maji Whalen. I just turned 16 years old. I am non-binary which mean I use they/them pronouns. I have two dogs Sunny and Ruby! My interests are exploring, art, and hanging out with my friends and family. I would love to be a part of the council as I have heard a youth is needed.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE NOMINEE BIOS

Brian Pitti
I have been a member of GSLC since May of 2017. I am married to Nadine Pitti. I have 5 young adult children ranging from age 15 to 22. I am an Assistant General Manager for Wawa. My hobbies include working on cars, helping neighbors/friends/family with Handyman tasks and I have a small DJ Business. I enjoy spending time with my family and friends.

Julie Burt
Julie has been a member since June of 2002. She has 2 children, Sarah and Paul who went through GSLC programs. She lives in Bridgewater and works at Peapack-Gladstone Bank. For the past two years she has served on the Nominating Committee and she sings with Grace Alive!